

# Office of National Drug Control Policy

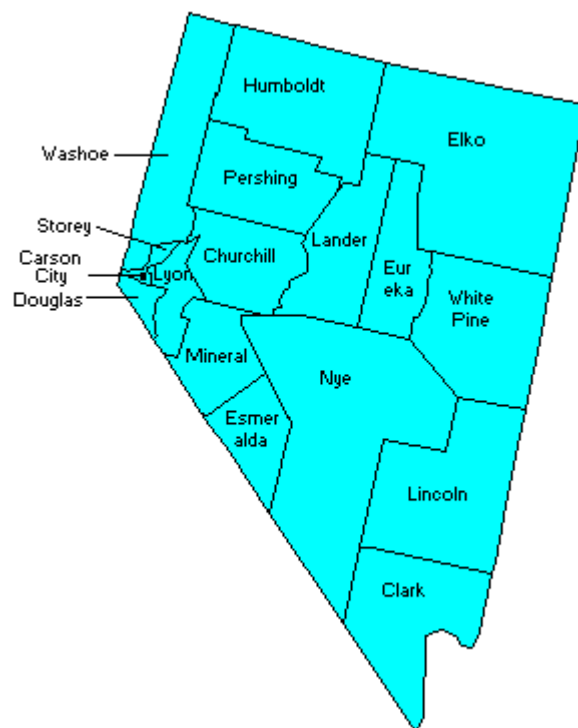
## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### State of Nevada

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#### Profile of Drug Indicators

July 1999



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **Nevada**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population: 1,202,000 (1990 census), 1,747,000 (1998 estimate)
- Gender: 50.9% Male, 49.1% Female
- Age: 24.8% under 18 years old, 10.5% 65 years or older
- Race/Ethnicity: 84.3% White, 6.5% Black, 1.6% American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut, 3.2% Asian or Pacific Islander, 4.4% Other, 10.3% Hispanic Origin
- Percent of population below the poverty level: 9.8%

### **Politics<sup>2</sup>**

- Governor: Kenny Guinn
- Lt. Governor: Lorraine T. Hunt
- Attorney General: Sue Del Papa
- Secretary of State: Dean Heller
- Senate Members: Richard Bryan (D), Harry Reid (D)
- House Members: Shelley Berkley (D), James Gibbons (R)

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- In FY 1998 ONDCP in conjunction with OJJDP awarded \$98,794 to the BEST Partnership for A Drug-Free Nevada under the Drug-Free Communities Support Program grant. BEST was established in 1991 as a 15-member coalition and advisory board for an Education Department Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act Grant. Proposed project activities include:
  - Educate and enable the youth of Southern Nevada to reject illegal drugs.
  - Increase media partnerships and public relations that target the use of illegal drugs.
  - Increase parental education and support regarding drug use.
  - Improve coordination and collaboration among all sectors of the community.
  - Serve as the information resource and communication and technical link regarding alcohol, tobacco, and other drug issues to agencies and the community.<sup>3</sup>
- The Nevada State Legislature created the Commission on Substance Abuse Education, Prevention, Enforcement and Treatment, as well as, the Office of Substance Abuse Coordinator. This legislation was enacted on July 1, 1989. The Commission is comprised of thirteen members. Legislation mandates three appointees represent law enforcement who are knowledgeable in the areas of the penal system, parole and probation and the judicial system; three appointees representing education; three appointees who are managers of programs accredited by the state to treat persons who abuse drugs and alcohol; and four appointees who represent the general public. At least three of the commission members must be representative of Northern Nevada, three representatives of rural Nevada, and three representatives of Southern Nevada.

The 1997 Legislative Session brought about discussion as to their actual mission and realistically, what the volunteer body should be achieving. Consequently, through the recommendation of the joint financial committee, the Commission was directed to rewrite the NRS to realistically define the goals, and produce a strategic plan.

Additionally, the administrative duties were placed back in the realm of DMV & PS. The logic behind this decision was: (1.) The Commission serves as the Drug Policy board for a major grant program within the Department; (2.) This grant program provides the primary funding for the Commission.<sup>4</sup>

- The Las Vegas initiative was founded in 1992 as a recognized Weed and Seed site, but it was not funded in Meadows Village until 1994. The Meadows Village target area is 14 blocks bounded on all sides by commercial development. The population is approximately 5,000 with 44.4 percent of residents being foreign born. The unemployment rate is 13.9 percent for males and 15.4 percent for females. The median family income is \$15,931 and over 28 percent of all families live below the poverty level. There is a large population of undocumented immigrants and 51.7 percent of residents speak a language other than English. Of the people over 25, 54 percent are not high school graduates and 28 percent of those 25 and older have less than a 9th grade education. Major problems facing the community (per a resident survey) were crime, educational needs, medical services, economic opportunities, capital community improvements and social services. The West Las Vegas site has a population of 15,629 with 78.23 percent Black, 16.37 percent Caucasian, .76 percent American Indian, .49 percent Asian and 4.15 percent other. The unemployment rate is 16.9 percent; income ranges between \$8,158 to \$23,065.

Some milestones for the Las Vegas initiative include: reducing the percentage of the population who do not speak English, increasing resident immigration services, establishing naturalization classes, increasing employment rate and job training of installing/modifying a computerized system (ServiceLink) in the Safe Haven, eliminating the waiting list for parent education classes, placement programs, mentor programs, recreational programs, airing of radio coverage of Weed and Seed efforts, establishing neighborhood associations and Adopt Your Block strategies.

Law enforcement strategies included sweeps that removed open-air drug markets, identification of known dealers and crack houses, and an increase in police/community interaction. Community hotlines, the bike patrols, Citizen's Police Academy, and community watch programs are all key in the success of community policing.<sup>5</sup>

## Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- In 1997 there were 35 law enforcement agencies in the State of Nevada. These agencies employed 4,118 officers.<sup>6</sup>

### Arrests in Nevada, 1995-1997

Offense	1995	1996	1997
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	161	174	68
Forcible rape	270	290	86
Robbery	1,312	1,387	478
Aggravated assault	1,607	1,757	1,060
Burglary	3,438	4,185	1,552
Larceny-theft	11,575	11,722	5,163
Motor vehicle theft	1,170	1,456	277
Arson	77	102	90
<b>Drug abuse violations</b>	<b>9,325</b>	<b>8,753</b>	<b>5,093</b>
Driving Under the Influence	6,102	7,473	4,553
Liquor Laws	4,393	4,989	3,188
Drunkenness	424	681	582

- Of all arrests (5,093) for drug abuse violations in 1997, 932 involved offenders under the age of 18.
- In Las Vegas, Nevada 56.8% of male arrestees and 70.3% of female arrestees tested positive for drugs during 1998.<sup>7</sup>

### Percent Positive for Drugs, By Offense Category, Las Vegas 1998

Offense Category	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth.		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	10.0	0	31.4	20.0	7.1	0	42.9	40.0
Property	39.5	33.3	18.4	33.3	10.5	0	63.2	66.7
Drug	38.2	35.7	35.3	28.6	19.1	35.7	77.9	85.7
Other	17.6	46.7	22.9	13.3	15.9	26.7	51.2	66.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>24.2</b>	<b>35.1</b>	<b>25.8</b>	<b>21.6</b>	<b>13.8</b>	<b>24.3</b>	<b>56.8</b>	<b>70.3</b>

## Juveniles

- A survey of Nevada high school students indicated that 46.2% of them had tried marijuana at least once in their lifetimes. The national average for lifetime marijuana use was 47.1%.<sup>8</sup>

Percent of Nevada High School Students Using Selected Drugs, 1997

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime Marijuana Use (1)	45.8	46.6	46.2
Current Marijuana Use (2)	23.7	25.9	24.8
Lifetime Cocaine Use	14.2	11.6	12.8
Current Cocaine Use	5.3	5.8	5.5
Lifetime "Crack" or "Freebase" Use	8.7	6.9	7.8
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	2.5	4.2	3.4
Lifetime Injected Illegal Drug Use (3)	1.9	2.7	2.3
Lifetime Use of Other Illegal Drugs (4)	21.3	18.8	19.9
Lifetime Use of Inhalants	20.6	19.8	20.2

1. Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life
2. Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey
3. Used a needle to inject drugs
4. Other Drugs Include = LSD, PCP, MDMA, Heroin, Methamphetamine, and Mushrooms.

## Drugs, Trafficking, and Seizures

- Drug Trends<sup>9</sup>

A statewide survey of drug use, has shown that methamphetamine has surpassed marijuana as the drug of choice in Nevada. After methamphetamine and marijuana the most popular drug is cocaine then heroin. Other trends in Nevada include an increase of juvenile drug use and crime; an increase in gangs and gang violence; a decrease in the price of drugs; and an increase in drug related crimes including burglaries, thefts, domestic violence, and shootings.
- Drug Trends in Rural Areas<sup>9</sup>

Violent crime and drug use are increasing the rural areas of Nevada. There has been an influx of persons into Nevada to work in the mines in the rural areas. This population is transient and many use alcohol and drugs. Methamphetamine use and production has also increased in Nevada's rural areas. Methamphetamine producers find it advantageous to manufacture the drug in the rural areas to help diminish the possibility of detection. Many of the small rural towns have grown greatly in recent years and the law enforcement agencies have had trouble keeping up with the growth.

➤ Drug Trends in Urban Areas<sup>9</sup>

The urban areas of Nevada have seen an increase in population in recent years. This increase has also led to more drug related crime including gang activity, domestic violence, and juvenile drug use. The most populated urban area in Nevada is Clark County, which is on the border of Arizona and Nevada. The population of Clark County has grown rapidly like the rest of Nevada. The school district of this county has also grown greatly and was the 9<sup>th</sup> largest school district in the nation. The number of drug related crimes in the school district have gone up in recent years. The Clark County School District Police handled 5,327 incidents during the 1996 school year.

- During 1998, the DEA's Marijuana Eradication and Suppression program was responsible for eradicating 3,211 marijuana plants in Nevada.<sup>10</sup>

Marijuana Eradication, Nevada 1996-1998

	1996	1997	1998
<b>Outdoor Operations</b>			
Plots Eradicated	5	3	2
Cultivated Plants Eradicated	388	300	308
Ditchweed Eradicated	0	0	0
<b>Indoor Operations</b>			
Grows Seized	7	7	4
Plants Eradicated	690	250	2,903
<b>Total Plants Eradicated</b>	<b>1,078</b>	<b>550</b>	<b>3,211</b>
Number of Arrests	17	12	14
Number of Weapons Seized	12	1	6
Value of Assets Seized	\$98,053	\$350	\$23,411

### Consequences of Use

- The number of drug-related deaths that occurred in Las Vegas, Nevada increased 22.3% from 121 in 1995 to 148 in 1996<sup>11</sup>

#### Drug Abuse Deaths in Las Vegas, 1995-96

<b>Selected Characteristics</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>
Total drug-abuse episodes	121	148
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	95	116
Female	25	32
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>		
White	91	122
Black	19	14
Hispanic	9	11
Other	2	1
<b>AGE</b>		
6-17	1	1
18-25	9	17
26-34	29	32
35 and up	70	85
Unknown	12	13
<b>SELECTED DRUGS</b>		
Alcohol-in-comb	46	52
Cocaine	59	68
Heroin/Morphine	36	55
Marijuana/Hashish	0	2
Methadone	2	7
Methamphetamine	47	50
PCP	4	1
<b>Total Drug Mentions</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>357</b>

### Courts

- Of the 398 Federal defendants in Nevada during FY 1997 19.7% were charged with a drug-related crime. The most common drug type in these prosecutions was crack cocaine (51.2%), followed by methamphetamine (19.2%), marijuana (7.6%), powder cocaine (7.6%), and heroin (3.8%). Other unspecified drugs accounted for 10.2% of drug types. Drug trafficking was the most common drug related charge accounting for 15.6% of all charges.<sup>12</sup>

### Corrections

- In 1997 Nevada correctional authorities held 9,024 inmates, a 6.9% increase from the 8,439 inmates in 1996.<sup>13</sup> Nevada Department of Prisons test 5% of the prison population a month at random for drugs. Nevada also tests inmates involved in drug treatment programs once every three months in addition to random testing.<sup>14</sup>

## **Treatment**

- There were 61 drug treatment facilities in Nevada during 1996; these facilities served 4,082 clients. Of the 4,082 clients 23.2% entered treatment for alcohol abuse problems, 31.2% entered treatment for drug abuse problems, and 45.6% of the clients entered treatment for both alcohol and drug abuse related problems.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

<sup>2</sup> State of Nevada Web site: <http://www.state.nv.us/>

<sup>3</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>

<sup>4</sup> Nevada Office of Criminal Justice Assistance Web site: [http://www.state.nv.us/dmv\\_ps/cja.htm](http://www.state.nv.us/dmv_ps/cja.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Executive Office of Weed and Seed Web site: <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/eows.htm>

<sup>6</sup> Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Crime in the United States 1995-1997, Uniform Crime Reports*, October 1996, September 1997, November 1998

<sup>7</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1998 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, April 1999

<sup>8</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 1997*, August 1998

<sup>9</sup> Nevada Office of Criminal Justice Assistance, *Edward Byrne State & Local Law Enforcement Assistance Program: 1997 State Strategy*, 1997

<sup>10</sup> Drug Enforcement Administration, *1998 Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program Statistical Report*, March 1999

<sup>11</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, *Drug Abuse Warning Network - Annual Medical Examiner Data, 1996*, July 1998

<sup>12</sup> United States Sentencing Commission Web site: <http://www.ussc.gov/judpack/jp1997.htm>

<sup>13</sup> Bureau of Justice Statistics, *Prisoners in 1997*, August 1998

<sup>14</sup> Corrections Program Office, *State Efforts to Reduce Substance Abuse Among Offenders*, October 1998

<sup>15</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration, *Uniform Facility Data Set (UFDS): Data for 1996 and 1980-1996*, December 1997



This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#) For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues contact:

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